JAPAN HAS A STRONG FRIEND IN COLONEL JOHN M. BROOKE

Was Friend of Tycoon of Chrysanthemum Kingdom More Than Fifty Years Ago.

BELIEVES IN THEIR FORCE

Discovered Their Marvelous Latent Power Before Civilization Awoke Them to Activity.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)

LEXINGTON, VA., Feb. 20.—If for some reason there should be such a revulsion of feeling among the people of Virginia that there would be only one man left to sympathize with the Japanese and wish them the victory in the unequal war which they are waging against Russia, I would know without being told that that sole champion of the Japs was John M. Brooke, of Lexington, formerly of the United States and Confederate navies. Fifty years ago he first learned to admire the characteristics which have made friends for the little yellow men among all the nations of Christendom, and even then he began the prediction that the time would come when the nations of the earth would stand amazed at the rapid strides the people of the Chrysanthemum Kingdom would make in everything that pertains to advancement in accordance with occidental ideas of what constitutes progress towards higher civilization.

I ran down from Washington to Lexington the other day and spent some hours with Col. Brooke in his home at Lexington. The old sailor, living now among his logbooks, and surrounded by souvenirs and curios, picked up in all quarters of the earth, still has the clearest recollections of his earliest acquaintance with the Japanese, and to say a word in detraction of their qualities as men, or as a people capable of reaching the highest plans of civilization, is to invite an argument that will not end until Col. Brooke's opponent has admitted his error.

Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry had just opened the ports of Japan to the nations of the world when Col. Brooke first went to Japan. He was then a first lieutenant in the navy. He does not recall whether it was in the year 1854 or 1855 that he first visited Japan under the celebrated Comodore Rodgers.

JAPAN FIFTY YEARS AGO.

He saw something of the islands and the people on this cruise, and in the following year he was in command of the Fenimore Cooper, a vessel of the United States navy which made soundings between San Francisco and the Sandwich Island and Japan. He charted many of the harbors of Japan, and while in the discharge of this work he learned to know the Japanese and to admire their character. That the Japs learned to love "Barooki," as they called him in and effort to pronounce his name, is well demonstrated by the presents, beautiful and priceless, which Col. Brooke still treasures as his dearest possessions.

Col. Brooke is now past his seventy-seventh year, and does not recall all the details of his voyages and adventures as he once did. When I visited him he was suffering with a severe cold that made consideration difficult for him. He could not go into the minutiae of his adventures as fully as evidently he desired, but he could tell enough to make plain that recollections of his experiences with the Japs were among the most pleasant of his long life. He hopes to live to see Japan yet overcome the Russians and become the dominant power in Asia, after the British.

The Fenimore Cooper, on which Col. Brooke made the voyage to Japan in 1855, was a very small vessel, only seventy-five feet in length, and was purchased by the government from private persons, who had built her for use as a pilot boat off New York. Yet she encountered the storms of the Pacific in a manner which would have done credit to a much larger vessel, and Col. Brooke thought he had one of the staunchest crafts in the navy. But long after he had reached Japan, he went to the northern portion of the islands and while he was away a storm drove the Fenimore Cooper on the beach and completely wrecked her. It was then discovered that she was entirely unseaworthy, many of her timbers being rotten. He still rejoices that he did not attempt to make the return trip in her.

DANGER TO FOREIGNERS.

"There was not much civilization in Japan as the people know the word to-day," said Colonel Brooke, "when I was there. There was no feeling against foreigners manifested among the higher classes, and the officials of government were uniformly friendly, but among the common people there was a sentiment that we were intruders, and we were in more or less danger at all times. I never went into the streets of Yohohama after nightfall, where we were stationed the greater portion of the time, without having my sword drawn ready for defense at a moment's notice.

"The fact that one of the royal family of Russia, a Romanoff, was murdered by the Japanese, seems to be lost sight of in these days; yet it is a fact. One night I was seated at my quarters, near the street, when I heard a commotion some distance away, and ran to the spot. I found this Russian, who was a naval officer from aboard a Russian man of war in the harbor, lying on the ground, groaning and evidently in great pain. Some of my men had run up, and I made them take some doors off their hinges on a nearby house, and we carried the wounded man to our quarters. He was terribly wounded with a sword. A cut three or four inches in depth extended obliquely across his back, and he was bleeding profusely. He managed to ask for water, and died in an hour or so."

Colonel Brooke does not know that the Russian government ever undertook to obtain redress from Japan for the murder of one of the reigning family.

Colonel Brooke was a close observer of the habits and customs of the Japanese. He saw enough to convince him that they were people of great promise. Colonel Brooke endeavored by every means possible to obtain the confidence of the people, and his kind and just treatment made them his strong friends. The Tycoon became one of his friends, and among the souvenirs which Colonel Brooke cherishes there is none upon which so high a value is placed as upon a magnificent sword presented by His Majesty. The blade of this weapon is of such fine steel and carries such a keen edge that it will cut a thin sheet of paper in twain as easily as a barber cuts a hair.

COMMANDED JAPANESE VESSEL.

At the completion of the surveys which Colonel Brooke was making for the United States government, he was requested by the Tycoon to take command of the Kandimar, a Japanese war vessel, which was to be used in conveying the second Japanese embassy to this country. Col. Brooke, who was then a first lieutenant of the navy, sought and obtained from Comodore Tatnall, who was then in command of the Asiatic squadron, the necessary permission, and sailed for San Francisco. The embassy was composed of several distinguished men of the empire, including Admiral Katz. The Japs were not used to sailing long distances, and they had seen enough of the seamanship of Lieutenant Brooke to convince them that something like his ability was needed if the vessel were to be gotten across the Pacific. Before they reached San Francisco they were more than ever impressed with the wisdom of having chosen a western sailor to command. On the trip over Lieutenant Brooke purposely took the vessel into the center of a cyclone, and brought her out again, for the purpose of showing the Japanese that it could be done, which they had not thought possible. After this they were more than ever delighted with the skill of the navigator.

Col. Brooke recalls with evident pleasure one of the Japanese sailors, a man named Tomogord, who was about the only Jap aboard who could speak English. Tomogoro had been a sailor aboard a Jap whaling vessel, and Col. Brooke says he was one of the most active men and one of the best sailors he has ever known. As illustrative of the organization of the Japanese navy at that time, and the cheapness of human life among them, Col. Brooke recalls an interesting incident. Tomogoro, because of his skill as a sailor and his knowledge of English, was given the power of life and death over the crew, perhaps as a safeguard against any violence which the men might plan to inflict upon Lieutenant Brooke, who was almost entirely unfamiliar with the Japanese language, and therefore unable to understand any plotting if he overheard it.

One day not long after setting sail to the westward, Lieutenant Brooke gave an order to some of the sailors aloft. He heard some muttering amongst them, but did not know its intent. Tomogoro, who was on the deck, ran below, and was gone for some time. Not long afterwards he asked Col. Brooke if he recalled seeing him go below, and upon receiving an affirmative reply, said that he had gone to get his sword for the purpose of beheading two of the sailors, who were growing mutinous. One of the Japanese officers had said to him, "Better think, Tomogoro, better think." Tomogoro said he thought again and concluded that he would spare the lives of the sailors, whom he had determined to decapitate on the deck as a warning to all mutineers aboard.

FINE SWORDSMEN.

When the vessel reached San Francisco, the Japanese officials who composed the embassy were the recipients of every possible attention at the hands of the people of the city, and Col. Brooke was their constant companion at all the functions which they attended. One night he and a number of the Japs were returning from some kind of entertainment when they passed a livery stable, the doors of which were open. Inside there was a broad clean floor, well lighted, and the Japs invited him to go in. He did so, not knowing what they intended to do. As soon as they entered one of the officers drew his sword and began giving an exhibition of his skill with the weapon, which, Col. Brooke, who was himself an expert swordsman, says he has never seen equaled. The weapon was then almost the only one in general use among the Japanese, and every man had to be master of it.

When the vessel was brought safely into the port of San Francisco, the Japanese officers brought a chest to Col. Brooke, and opening it showed him gold coins of an immense total value. Tomogoro told him to take as much as he would for his services in bringing the ship across the ocean. He would not accept a penny, so stern was his sense of the honor that should characterize the officers of the American navy.

After the war, probably in 1867, another Japanese embassy came to the United States. The memory of Col. Brooke's visit to the country was still fresh in their minds, and they sent down to the Virginia Military Institute, where he was then a professor, to invite him to come to Washington to visit them. When Col. Brooke reached the embassy in Washington, he was informed that an American officer, who had the embassy in charge, had given orders that no one was to be admitted without his permission. But one of the Japanese heard that their visitor was Brooke, and it was but a moment until he was with his friends upstairs, receiving their expressions of pleasure at meeting the man whom the people of Japan bore in such affectionate remembrance.

LIFE OF HARD WORK.

An ideal place to spend an afternooon is in the cosy parlor at Col. Brooke's home on the hillside facing the buildings of the Virginia Military Institute at Lexington, the scene of so many years of hard work on the part of Col. Brooke, who for years occupied the chair of physics in the institution. He retired several years ago, and since that time has remained in private life, delving in his books, contributing to scientific magazines, and talking with friends of his adventures by land and by sea. Many of the old logs which are in the library shelves in the home are strongly odorous of salt water, owing to the bath which they received when the Fenimore Cooper was wrecked on the coast of Japan, and it is Col. Brooke's habit to ask visitors who want to see his books to touch their tongues to the leaves of the log and experience the salty taste.

The contents of the big cabinet which occupies one end of the room interested me more than the books. The shelves are filled to their capacity with curios from every land, but most prominent and most cherished are those which have come from Japan. The splendid sword presented by the Tycoon, reposing in its wooden scabbard, occupies the place of honor. There is a box of beautiful lacquer ware, which Mrs. Brooke calls the "chrysanthemum box," because of the delicate tracery of chrysanthemums on the lid of the box. There is a beautiful specimen of the celebrated rock crystal of Japan, given by a Japanese friend. Then there are beautifully worked slippers, a harpooner's apparatus, an engraved crystal, representative of a long tail turtle, which is the Japanese emblem of long life.

One of the treasures of the collection which is treasured by Mrs. Brooke is a little cup of sand from Tampa, where her husband was born nearly seventy-eight years ago. Col. Brooke's father, General George Mercer Brooke, was then in command of the post at Tampa. Gen. Brooke, a magnificent oil portrait of whom occupies a place on the wall of his son's parlor, was the most distinguished officer from Virginia in the war of 1812, with the possible exception of Gen. Scott, and the visitor is still shown a splendid sword presented him by the State of Virginia as a testimonial of appreciation of the gallant services rendered in the war.

ORIGINAL GRADUATE.

Colonel Brooke was in the first class ever graduated from Annapolis, and is perhaps one of the oldest, if not the oldest of the living graduates of the academy.

When the war between the States began, and Virginia seceded from the Union, Captain Brooke, as he then was, resigned his commission in the old navy and offered his services to the Confederate government. They were promptly accepted, as he had won great reputation as a scientific officer. He had been for two years on duty at the naval observatory in Washington, and had frequently contributed to the scientific magazines. He had also invented an apparatus for deep-sea sounding, which had come into the most general use, and won an international reputation for the inventor. Kaiser Wilhelm I, of Germany, presented Col. Brooke with the gold medal of science awarded by the Academy of Berlin, in appreciation of the contribution of Col. Brooke to the advancement of science.

The Confederate government at once availed itself of the tender of services made by Col. Brooke, and Secretary Stephen Mallory, of the Navy Department, appointed him to the post of chief of the bureau of ordnance and hydrography. As the head of this bureau Col. Brooke had manufactured the Brooke gun, which was made at the Tredegar Works in Richmond. The gun was the first of what may be termed ordnance of the modern type, in that it was wrapped with wrought iron, thus adding greatly to its strength.

Col. Brooke is best known to the world as the designer of the Merrimac, the Confederate ram, which at one time threatened to destroy the navy of the United States, and completely revolutionized naval architecture, as it was the first ironclad ever seen on the seas. Col. Brooke was also the discoverer of the value of the air-space in cannon, which has been of great value to the makers of heavy ordnance. He mapped out the route of the Shenandoah, the Confederate cruiser, which almost swept the United States merchant marine from the seas, and was never captured.

When the Confederacy fell Col. Brooke not only found himself without employment, but penniless as well. The Virginia Military Institute, which had been almost destroyed by the Federal army, was just recuperating from the blow, and Col. Brooke was called to the chair of physics, and he accepted the position. There are thousands of old cadets scattered over the country who hold Col. Brooke in affectionate remembrance, and still recall the stories he has told them of adventures while serving his country afloat.

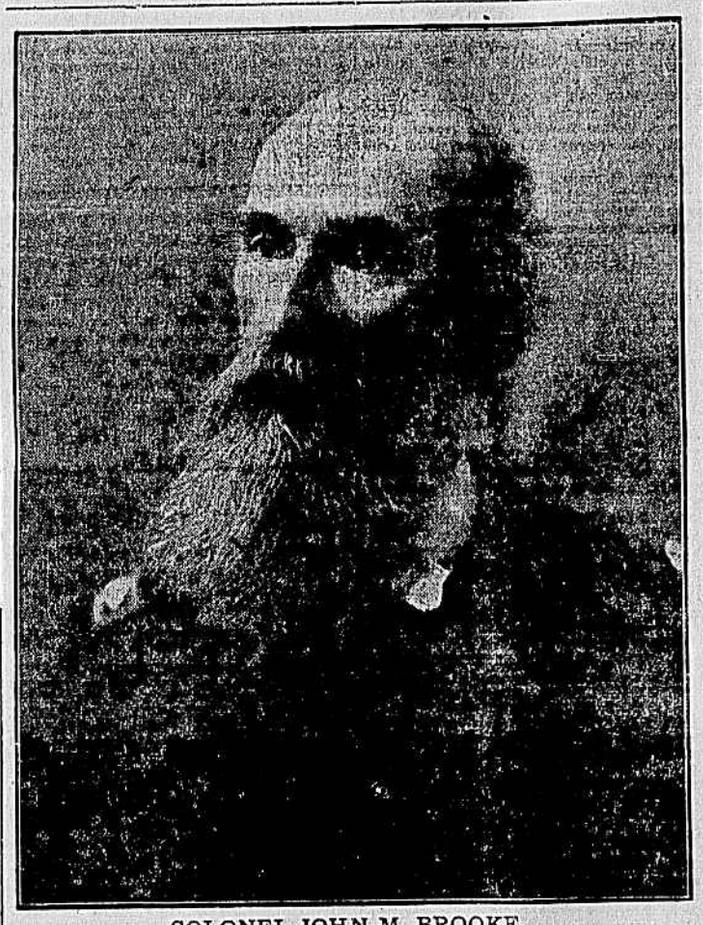
TOOK A MEXICAN FORT.

A story told me the other afternoon by Col. Brooke causes one to believe that the nations of the world were not formerly so touchy concerning their honor as they now are. In 1842 Commodore Jones, in command of the Pacific squadron, consisting of the warship United States and the celebrated Cyane, under Captain Stribling, took up the idea that the English were about to seize the castle of Monterey on the coast of California. So the American commander promptly sent a force ashore and took possession of the fort in the name of the United States. There was no resistance. Col. Brooke, then a lieutenant on the Cyane, made a drawing of the scene as the United States put off to take possession of the castle, and it adorns a page of one of his logbooks. The Americans held the fort for two days and then finding that the English had no intention of taking the fort, withdrew and made matters all right with the Mexicans by saluting the flag of that nation, which was raised again when the Americans called their force away.

It is impossible to conceive in these days of any respectable nation taking the fort of another with which it was not at war, and if it should so far forget the amenities of international law as to take the stronghold of a nation with which it was at peace, the act would be certain to provoke a resort to arms, unless apology were much more full than that supposed to be contained in simply saluting the flag of the injured nation.

Col. Brooke retired from the institute on a pension some years ago. He is accorded the rank of colonel, which is the right of all professors in the V. M. I., but some of his old friends give him the title of captain, which was his naval rank. Col. Brooke is good for some years yet, and it is with pleasure that I look forward to hearing him talk again next summer, when I go down to Lexington to attend the finals of the Institute, and when the outcome of the war between Japan and Russia will probably be no longer a matter of speculation.

As to that outcome there is little doubt in the mind of Col. Brooke. "Watch the Japanese," said the old sailor as I was bidding him good-by. "Unless something happens Russia is going to be defeated, and the Japanese army will vindicate its right to be regarded as among the most powerful fighting machines in the world."



COLONEL JOHN M. BROOKE.

Bank Receiver.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)

WINSTON-SALEM, N. C., Feb. 20.—Judge W. R. Allen, to-day appointed J. C. Clifford, of Dunn, receiver for the Bank of Dunn, recently closed by the Corporation Commission upon report of State Bank Examiner Ellington.

Mr. Clifford was recommended by the Corporation Commission.

SOME REMINISCENCES.

Chesapeake Bay—Another Instance When It Was Frozen Over—Astor and Irving.

Editor of the Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—A writer in The Times-Dispatch of January 24th gives a clipping taken from the old Dispatch. This quoted article was in reference to the question whether the Chesapeake Bay had ever been frozen over so as to impede navigation. The writer said that it was frozen over during the great snoy of 1557, known, I believe, as "Cox's snow storm." He also stated that Hon. A. H. Stephens in his School History says that the winter of 1834-'35 was the coldest ever known; that the bay was frozen over from its head to Cape Henry; that in Georgia the Savannah River was frozen over, big trees one hundred years old were killed; that on February 8th the cold was intense, and that the Saturday before was still remembered as "the cold Saturday." Allusion was also made to the Dan River being frozen over to such an extent that four horse wagons heavily laden with hogsheads of tobacco were driven over the ice.

The foregoing reminded me that I had read something in Washington Irving's Astoria" about the Chesapeake Bay having been frozen over at an earlier date than 1857 or 1834.

Irving says that John Jacob Astor, who was born in the "honest little German village of Waldorf"—and it is from this little German village that the New York hotel takes its name, I suppose—was, at the close of the American Revolution, still in London, whither he had gone from Germany. In November, 1783, Astor embarked in a vessel bound for Baltimore, and arrived in Hampton Roads in January 1784. The winter was one of extreme severity, and Astor's ship, with many others, was detained by the ice in and about Chesapeake Bay for nearly three months.

Speaking of Astor, it may not be amiss to relate that in this same work Irving says that Astor was a man of buoyant confidence. While yet almost a stranger in the city of New York, and in very straitened circumstances, he passed a row of newly erected houses, considered models of beauty. Looking up at them he said, "I'll build, one day or other, a greater house in this very street" (Broadway.) We all know that he did. This reminds one of teh confidence of Disraeli, who, when jeered at by the members of the English Parliament, said, as he took his seat, "I'll make you hear me yet," showing how often a wise man is laughed at by fools.

From the frozen waters of Chesapeake Bay to horses' tails is quite a long jump, but seeing every day evidences of a certain barbarous practice I cannot forbear quoting a passage from "Astoria." It is this (alluding to the whites purchasing horses from the Indians):

"As soon as a horse was purchased, his tail was cropped, a sure mode of distinguishing him from the horses of the tribe; for the Indians disdain to practice this absurd, barbarous, and indecent mutilation, invented by some mean and vulgar mind, insensible to the merit and perfections of the animal. On the contrary, the Indian horses are suffered to remain in every respect the superb and beautiful animals which nature formed them."

Irving was noted for being a gentle, genial gentleman, with a heart as tender as a woman's, and having a fine conception of what is beautiful. And he certainly manifests his tender and refined feelings and his taste for what is beautiful when he denounces the cruel, ugly fashion of docking the horse's flowing tail.

One anecdote concerning the charming author of "The Sketch Book" and I'll lay down my pen.

When Irving was an old man living at Sunnyside on the Hudson—a river he loved so well and made so famous—he was strolling along a path near by his orchard. Some boys met him, but did not know he was owner of the orchard. "Mister," said one of the boys, "give me a lift, and I'll shake the old man's best tree and give you some of the apples." Irving gave him a lift over the fence, and "Sure enough," said Irving, "the little fellow did shake my best tree and divided my own apples with me!"

EARNEST L. BOLLING.

WAR NAMES OF ORIENT.

Japan's Commissioner Gives a Key to Their Pronunciation.

The following key to the pronunciation of Japanese, Chinese and Korean geographical names was prepared by Hajime Ota, the Japanese World's Fair commissioner: Japanese geographical names are pronounced by Japaneso with little accent, as a rule. The vowels are spoken broadly—"a" as "ah," "e" as long "e," "i" as short "e," "o" generally as "o," but sometimes as "aw," and "u" as "oo."

There is little slurring of syllables; the divisions are distinct, and as a rule both the final letter of a syllable and the first letter of the following one retain their distinct pronunciation.

This leads Americans frequently to suppose that another sound has been introduced between the syllables. Take the name "Tokio." It is pronounced "To-kyo"—the "o" in the first syllable and the "k" in the second being given such individual pronounciation that when spoken rapidly it sounds to the unaccustomed ear much like the "Toa-kyoh."

"F" is not spoken distinctly when it begins the first syllable and is followed by "u," as in Fukuoko. This word is pronounced "Foo-kwoo-o-kah," the sound being much as though it were "fKwoo-o-kah."

Here are some of the Japanese names most frequently met with in the war news:

Tokio—Toa-kyoh.
Nagasaki—Nah-gah-sah-kee.
Hakodate—Hah-ko-dah-teh.
Kagoshima—Kah-go-she-mah, a slight accent on last syllable.
Shimonoseki—She-mon-o-say-kee.
Fukuoko—fKwoo-o-kah.
Sasebo—Sah-say-bo.
Hiroshima—sHe-ro-she-mah. (The affix, "shima," frequently found in Japanese names, signifies "island." Thus, "sHe-ro-island."
Tokushima—To-koo-she-mah, "to" as "tow" in "towboat."
Takaoka—Tah-kah-oh-ka.
Nanao—Nah-nah-oh.
Tsuruga—Tsoo-roo-gah.
Nigata—Nzhe-zhe-gah-tah, the double "i" taking the sound of "zhe-zhe." The word has a slight accent on the third syllable.
Fuguyama—F'kah-mah; slight accent on the first syllable.
Sakata—Sah-kah-tah.
Ishikari—Eesh-e-kah-rey (a bay).
Osaka—Oh-sah-kah.
Shikoku—She-ko-koo.
Kiushu—Kyu-shoo, the first "u" given its full sound.

In many respects Korean and Chinese names are pronounced after the same rules as Japanese, although many have a decided accent on the final syllable. Among them are:

Yalu—Yah-loo, river dividing Korea and Manchuria.
Chemulpo—Chee-mweel-po, accented on the second syllable.
Masampo—Mah-sahm-po, accent on second syllable.
Mokpo—Mok-po, accent on first syllable, the "k" being sounded much like the "ch" in the German "ach."
Chefu—Chee-foo, accent on last syllable, as in the following instances:
Wiju—Wee-zhoo.
Yongampo—Yong-ahm-po, the "ng" being sounded as it is in French.
Haiji—Whah-eh-zhee, the first two syllables being practically only one.
Seoul—Sool.
Fusan—Foo-sahm.
Wonson—Wohn-sohn.
Songchin—sohn-cheen.
Chinnampo—Cheen-nahm-po.
Yang-Yang—Yahng-yahng.
Kosong—Ko-seng.
Samchok—Sahm-chalk.
Chungju—Chwang-zhu, "ju" signifying "ville," as "Chung-ville."
Tientsin—Tain-shen.
Tailenwan—Tah-leen-wahn.
Chinwangtao—Sheen-wahn-tau.
Weihaiwei—Wee-high-way.
Kiaochau—Kwaw-chaw.
Pechili—Pee-chee-lee.

—St. Louis Globe-Dispatch.

The deepest gold mine in the world is at Bendigo, Australia. Its shaft is down 3,301 feet, or only 99 feet short of three-quarters of a mile. The heat at that depth is 108 degrees.